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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/655,054	09/05/2000	John L. Shannon JR.	122.1.1/USA	7269

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12/05/2002

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EXAMINER

HUNTER, ALVIN A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3711

DATE MAILED: 12/05/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/655,054

Applicant(s)

SHANNON, JOHN L.

Examiner

Alvin A. Hunter

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 September 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 27-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 27-36 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 27-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Miller (USPN 5665038).

Miller discloses the same structure as that of the applicant's invention and therefore, the function of the invention is inherent (See Figures 1 and 2).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 27-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cheney (USPN 4976432) in view of Zody (USPN 5352057).

Cheney discloses a sectional and height adjustable singles stick, in which sections are combined in order to achieve the desired height for holding up a tennis net (See Abstract). The sections are connected by inserting the dowel end of a section into the hollow bottom end of another section (See Column 7, lines 50 through 68; and Column 8, lines 1 through 37). Cheney also suggests that the dowels (22) may be

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constructed of any suitable material, shape, and size, which would imply that having a non circular shape would accomplish that of the circular shape (See Column 7, lines 33 through 67). It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to one having ordinary skill in the art to have any shaped dowels, such as non-circular, for facilitating the connection of the dowels due to the applicant not providing any advantages, purpose, or unexpected results for making the invention non-circular. Cheney also discloses that the device may be stored within a player's equipment tote bag (See Column 2, lines 35 through 41). It is also noted that the device has a slot (10) for receiving any width net band (See Column 2, lines 42 through 59). Cheney does not disclose a locking pin for holding the present invention in place. Zody discloses that biased detent locking mechanisms are commonly known within the art for supporting adjustable, telescoping members in a desired position (See Background of the Invention). As seen in Figure 5 of Zody, the locking mechanism (16), which is primarily connected to the inner telescoping member (12), is spring biased to where the lock automatically sets into next desired position (Also See Column 67 through 65). Comparing the present invention with the combination of Cheney and Zody, it would appear that making the singles stick telescoping is nothing more an invention comprising technology commonly known within the art; therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the invention of Cheney telescoping as a matter of design choice in order to facilitate adjustment and storage. It also would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to utilize a biased or manually

removable locking mechanism as a matter of design choice in order to support a structure in a desired position.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 6-8, 10-14 and 20-26 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alvin A. Hunter whose telephone number is 703-306-5693. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 7:30AM to 4:00PM Eastern Time.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Sewell, can be reached on (703) 308-2126. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-308-7768.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1148.



Paul T. Sewell
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Group 3700